

REMARKS:

In the foregoing amendments, claim 1 was amended by including the limitations of claim 4 therein. Similarly, claim 7 was amended by including the limitations of claim 11 therein. Claims 4 and 11 were canceled. The foregoing amendments are being made to clarify what was already implied in applicant's claims and these amendments are not narrowing amendments and are not being made for reasons substantially related to patentability presented. Since these amendments place the application in condition for allowance, as explained below, applicant respectfully requests that the foregoing amendments be entered under the provisions of 37 C.F.R. § 1.116(b) for the purposes of placing the application in condition for allowance or for the purposes of appeal.

Claims 1, 2, 5-9 and 12-15 remain in the application for consideration by the examiner. Previously presented claims 4 and 11 were not rejected over prior art. The Official action objected to claims 4 and 11 as containing allowable subject matter, and stated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In the foregoing amendments, the limitations of claim 4 were inserted into claim 1, essentially rewriting claim 4 as an independent claim. Similarly, the limitations of claim 11 were inserted into claim 7, essentially rewriting claim 7 as an independent claim. Claims 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, and 12-15 depend directly or indirectly from amended claims 1 and 7. Accordingly, these claims are allowable for the same reasons claims 4 and 11 were allowable.

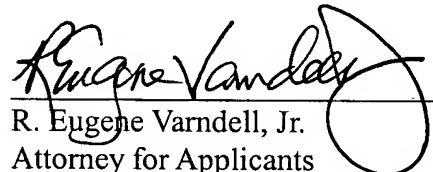
The Official action set forth a single rejection of claims 1, 2, 5-9 and 12-15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being anticipated by U.S. patent No. 5,625,002 of Kado *et al.*, as further evidenced by U.S. patent No. 3,919,177 of Campbell *et al.*, in view of Derwent Abstract of

Japanese patent No. JP 2001-0160011 A of Nishimura *et al.* This rejection is set forth on pages 2-7 of the Official action. Since the limitations of previously presented allowable claims 4 and 11 were respectively incorporated into claims 1 and 7, and since the remaining claims depend directly or indirectly from claims 1 and 7, applicant respectfully submits that this rejection is now moot.

Based on the above, a formal allowance of claims 1, 2, 5-9 and 12-15 is respectfully requested. While it is believed that all the claims in this application are in condition for allowance, should the examiner have any comments or questions, it is respectfully requested that the undersigned be telephoned at the below listed number to resolve any outstanding issues.

In the event this paper is not timely filed, applicant hereby petitions for an appropriate extension of time. The fee therefor, as well as any other fees which become due, may be charged to our deposit account No. 50-1147.

Respectfully submitted,  
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